In the claims:

1.   (Original) A machine-based method comprising enabling storage of bindings that describe a document by associating content elements with layout elements, the layout elements defining layout features or placement information to be applied to the associated content elements in the document, the bindings being stored separately from both the content and layout elements.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising enabling storage of bindings that describe another, different document by associating at least one of the content elements with at least one of the layout elements, at least one layout element defining layout features or placement information to be applied to at least one corresponding content element in the different document, the bindings for the different document being stored separately from the bindings for the document and separately from the content and layout elements.

3.   (Currently amended) A machine-based method comprising enabling storage of bindings that describe a document by associating content elements with layout elements, the layout elements defining layout features or placement information to be applied to the associated content elements in the document, enabling storage of bindings that describe another, different document by associating at least one of the content elements with at least one of the layout elements, the at least one layout element defining layout features or placement information to be applied to the corresponding at least one content element in the different document, the bindings being stored separately from the content elements and separately from the layout elements.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 1 or 3 in which the bindings provide a primary control for the generation of the document and the different document.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 2 or 3 further comprising enabling generation of the document and the different document using the elements and bindings.

6.   (Original) The method of claim 1 or 3 further comprising enabling storage of the content elements and the layout elements.

7.   (Original) The method of claim 1 or 3 in which at least some of the layout elements and at least some of the content elements are identified by uniquely named binding sites.

8.   (Original) The method of claim 1 or 3 in which the content elements are stored in a portfolio and the layout elements are stored in a separate portfolio.

9.   (Original) The method of claim 1 or 3 in which some of the bindings are layout-centric and some of the bindings are content-centric.

10.   (Original) The method of claim 2 or 3 in which the bindings for the two documents are the same and at least one of the content elements and layout elements associated with the binding sites is different for the document and the different document.

11.   (Original) The method of claim 2 or 3 in which the bindings for the two documents are different and at least some of the content elements and the layout elements are the same for the document and the different document.

12.   (Original) A machine-based method comprising using an application program to create content elements for use in documents, storing the content elements in a format native to the application program, forming a content portfolio, based on the stored content elements, by storing unique binding site names associated with respective content elements, and storing information with each of the content elements that aids a formatter in generating documents based on the content elements and on layout elements stored in a layout portfolio.

13.   (Original) The method of claim 12 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises attributes associated with is the content elements.

14.   (Original) The method of claim 12 further comprising storing a binding specification which refers to the content elements.

15.   (Original) The method of claim 12 in which the forming of the content portfolio also comprises storing implementation specific properties.

16.   (Original) The method of claim 12 in which the forming of the content portfolio also comprises storing portfolio-specific attributes.

17.   (Original) The method of claim 12 in which the forming of the content portfolio also comprises storing a list of binding sites of elements belonging to the content portfolio.

18.   (Original) The method of claim 12 in which the forming of the content portfolio also comprises storing a list of groups of content elements belonging to the content portfolio.

19.   (Original) A medium storing a machine-readable program that enables storage of bindings that describe a document by associating content elements with layout elements, the layout elements defining layout features or placement information to be applied to the associated content elements in the document, the bindings being stored separately from both the content and layout elements.

20.   (Original) A medium storing a machine-readable program that enables storage of bindings that describe a document by associating content elements with layout elements, the layout elements defining layout features or placement information to be applied to the associated content elements in the document, and enables storage of bindings that describe another, different document by associating at least one of the content elements with at least one of the layout elements, the at least one layout element defining layout features or placement information to be applied to the corresponding at least one content elements in the different document.

21.   (Original) A medium storing a content portfolio capable of configuring a machine to enable generation of documents based on a content portfolio, a layout portfolio, and a binding specification, the content portfolio including content elements, names of unique binding sites associated with the content elements, and information configured to aid a formatter in generating the documents based on the content portfolio, the layout portfolio, and the binding specification.

22.   (Original) The medium of claim 21 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises attributes associated with the content elements.

23.   (Original) The medium of claim 21 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises implementation specific properties.

24.   (Original) The medium of claim 21 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises portfolio-specific attributes.

25.   (Original) The medium of claim 21 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises a list of binding sites of elements belonging to the content portfolio.

26.   (Original) The medium of claim 21 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises a list of groups of content elements belonging to the content portfolio.

27.   (Original) A machine-based method comprising using an application program to create layout elements for use in documents, storing the layout elements in a format native to the application program, forming a layout portfolio, based on the stored layout elements, by storing unique binding site names associated with respective layout elements, and storing information with each of the layout elements that aids a formatter in generating documents based on the layout elements and on content elements stored in a content portfolio.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises attributes associated with the layout elements.

29. (Original) The method of claim 27 further comprising storing binding specifications that refer to the layout elements.

30. (Original) The method of claim 27 in which the forming of the layout portfolio also comprises storing implementation specific properties.

31. (Original) The method of claim 27 in which the forming of the layout portfolio also comprises storing portfolio-specific attributes.

32. (Original) The method of claim 27 in which the forming of the layout portfolio also comprises storing a list of binding sites of elements belonging to the layout portfolio.

33. (Original) The method of claim 27 in which the forming of the layout portfolio also comprises storing a list of groups of layout elements belonging to the layout portfolio.

34. (Original) A medium storing a layout portfolio capable of configuring a machine to enable generation of documents based on the layout portfolio, a content portfolio, and a binding specification, the layout portfolio including layout elements, names of unique binding sites associated with the layout elements, and information configured to aid a formatter in generating the documents based on the layout portfolio, the content portfolio, and the binding specification.

35. (Original) The medium of claim 34 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises attributes associated with the layout elements.

36. (Original) The medium of claim 34 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises implementation specific properties.

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37. (Original) The medium of claim 34 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises portfolio-specific attributes.

38. (Original) The medium of claim 34 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises a list of binding sites of elements belonging to the layout portfolio.

39. (Original) The medium of claim 34 in which the information that aids the formatter comprises a list of groups of layout elements belonging to the layout portfolio.

40. (Original) A machine-based method comprising creating a binding specification for use in formatting documents based on the binding specification, content elements referenced by the binding specification, and layout elements referenced by the binding specification, and storing in the binding specification global bindings and direct bindings that aid the formatter in formatting documents.

41. (Original) The method of claim 40 in which the global bindings include a list of element bindings that define a default binding for elements of a specified type.

42. (Original) The method of claim 41 in which the global bindings include a list of model bindings that define a default model for a specified binding site.

43. (Original) The method of claim 40 in which the binding specification contains composition sequences that aid the formatter in formatting documents, the composition sequences defining the order in which formatting is to proceed using bindings between content elements and layout elements, each of the composition sequences including composition blocks containing ordered lists of direct bindings.

44. (Original) The method of claim 43 in which each of the direct bindings comprises a placement binding or a style binding.

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45. (Original) A medium storing a binding specification capable of configuring a machine to enable generation of documents based on the binding specification, a layout portfolio, and a content portfolio, the binding specification including global bindings and direct bindings that aid the formatter in formatting documents.

46. (Original) The medium of claim 45 in which the global bindings include a list of element bindings that define a default binding for elements of a specified type.

47. (Original) The medium of claim 45 in which the global bindings include a list of model bindings that define a default model for a specified binding site.

48. (Original) The medium of claim 45 in which the binding specification contains composition sequences that aid the formatter in formatting documents, the composition sequences defining the order in which formatting is to proceed using bindings between content elements and layout elements, each of the composition sequences including composition blocks containing ordered lists of direct bindings.

49. (Original) The medium of claim 45 in which each of the direct bindings comprises a placement binding or a style binding.

50. (Canceled)

51. (Original) A machine-based method of formatting a document using stored content elements and stored layout elements, the stored content elements including content aspects and layout aspects, the method comprising determining whether the layout should be dominated by the layout components or the layout aspects of the content components.

52.   (Original) The method of claim 51 in which the content elements include layout aspects and the bindings contain information sufficient to mediate a conflict between a layout aspect of a content element and a layout element with which the content element is associated.

53.   (Original) A medium storing a machine-readable program that enables an application program to create layout elements for use in documents, stores the layout elements in a format native to the application program, forms a layout portfolio, based on the stored layout elements, by storing unique binding site names associated with respective layout elements, and stores information with each of the layout elements, that aids a formatter in generating documents based on the layout elements and on content elements stored in a content portfolio.

54.   (Original) A medium storing a machine-readable program that enables creation of a binding specification for use in formatting documents based on the binding specification, content elements referenced by the binding specification, and layout elements referenced by the binding specification, and stores in the binding specification global bindings and direct bindings that aid the formatter in formatting documents.